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MARGOLIOUTH'S "CATALOGUE OF KABBALISTIC MSS. IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM"

Catalogue of the Hebrew and Samaritan Manuscripts in the British Museum. By G. MARGOLIOUTH. Part III, Section I: Kabbalah. London, 1909. pp. 155, 4°.

A GREAT part of the Jewish works of all times have not been made accessible by print, though they may have played an important part in the history of this literature. Much has been lost or was destroyed by fanatic persecutors and by unfavorable conditions, but numerous treasures of the large and many-sided literary activity of the Jews are stored in the great Libraries awaiting an editor or at least a scholar who after a thorough research makes them known to his co-workers. Catalogues of manuscripts, therefore, belong to the most important reference-books for the Jewish scholar, and most of the Libraries that can pride themselves on good collections of Hebrew MSS. have realized that it is as important to publish a catalogue of them as it is to spend money on their acquisition. Even of some private collections we have now more or less satisfactory catalogues, like that of the late D. Kaufmann and some parts of E. N. Adler's rich collections, and of Jewish institutions the Jews' College of London has set a good example in Hirschfeld's Catalogue. Of course, there are important and large libraries the treasures of which are only known to a very small extent, like that of Baron Günzburg in St. Petersburg containing over 2000 codices according to Wiener, *Bibliographie der Oster-Haggadah* (St. Petersburg, 1902, p. v), and the St. Petersburg Imperial Library. Of American collections almost nothing has been made public so far; yet Columbia College has a fair number of Hebrew MSS. and the New York Seminary has now over 1500 codices. Up to a short time ago, the British Museum collection was only known through the short list of 1893 giving very scant information. The full catalogue by G. Margoliouth therefore was received with great gratification especially as it satisfied all just requirements and showed that the author was fully prepared for his difficult task. The two previous volumes appeared in 1899 and 1905. Now the first section of the third and last volume has been issued separately.

The subject of the present part is a description of the Kabbalistic MSS. of the Museum. Margoliouth gives to them the same careful treatment as to other branches of literature, and it is worth mentioning that 155 large pages are devoted to 132 codices, while in the Paris Catalogue the description of 120 MSS. occupies 30 pages, in Neubauer's that of 435, 104 columns. Even when allowing for the much more compressed print there, one can readily see how much fuller information we are given on a subject which in general only interests very few scholars and is looked down upon by many. The kabbalistic literature offers special difficulty on account of the numerous anonymous treatises which occur often in different versions and in the case of which it is hard in many instances to determine where they begin and end. Only the master, Steinschneider, has so far given adequate descriptions of kabbalistic manuscripts especially in his Munich Catalogue (second edition, 1895) and in his *Hebraeische Bibliographie* as well as in Kobak's *Jeschurun*, vol. VI (German part). It is a pity that Margoliouth has not constantly had these before him and referred to them when describing his MSS. It is not a question merely of bibliographical references which might be left to the student who consults the book. In many cases the description could be made shorter and at the same time fuller; for instance in the frequent cases where two recensions of a book are known, it would be easy to determine with the help of Steinschneider's references to which of them a MS. belongs and instead of repeating excerpts that are given elsewhere new material could be added. Altogether the quotations too often contain typical passages that occur everywhere. This is the only point in which I have to criticise the method of this catalogue, which otherwise gives very full and exact details and deserves the same grateful recognition as the preceding volumes. In the following notes I give a number of references which I marked in going over the catalogue cursorily without any intention of completeness. In order not to take too much space, I have tried to be as brief as possible and only seldom give any conclusions and corrections to be derived from the passages quoted. For the same reason, I have given references to the MSS. of the New York Seminary only in two or three cases.

Of Cod. 737 there is a copy in Munich described in *Cat. Steinschneider* No. 81, from which the present description may be supplemented. For Aegidio de Viterbo, Elias Levita also copied Cod. Munich 71, and to him he dedicated the first edition of his *Bahur*, Rome 1518. It would be interesting to compare whether the quotation which Zunz, *Litg.*, 324, n. 1, gives from a Paris MS. of **סודי רי"א** occurs here and what poems Eleazar added to the *Hekalot*. About the numerical value of the title comp. also Neubauer, *Rabbins*, 468 f. For **הלכות מטטרון** (p. 5, n. a) comp. *HB.*, XIV, 32 ff.; p. 8, No. V, comp. *Ha-Karmel*, VII, 323.—The concluding sentence p. 8, col. 1, end, is taken from **שיעור קומה** (רי"א, f. 38a) as stated in the printed ed. of the **חבמה הנפש** (see *HB.*, XVII, 53). A similar conclusion existed in the **שם האברים** according to Moses of Tachau (*Ozar Nechmad*, III, 62). The name Abraham **החזה** for Ibn Ezra was also applied by Eleazar's contemporary Abraham b. Azriel (see Kaufmann, *Monatsschrift*, 1882, 361 f.). The preface of **גנת אנו** Cod. 741 is found also in *Cat. Ghirondi*, p. 21, No. 65, where it is preceded by a poem of 79 lines and two smaller ones. Of the **וצר הכבוד** (Cod. 742^{II}) a MS. of the Seminary Library (formerly Halberstam 449) contains also Ketubot, Giṭṭin, and Kiddushin. Besides the edition of Nowydwor 1808, another complete edition appeared in Warsaw 1879, which contains all the treatises though in different order (see Wiener, *Bibliotheca Friedlandiana*, p. 45).—Cod. 743, VII. The **שיר היחוד** of Ibn Waḳḳar has been printed very often; see Steinschneider *CB.*, No. 3323.—For Cod. 745, III, 1-4, comp. *Cat. Munich*, 24⁶. Cod. 745, III, 7b-c, were printed from this MS. in Kobak's *Jeschurun*, III (Hebrew part), p. 55-7; comp. *HB.*, III, 5; to c. comp. also Steinschneider *CB.*, col. 2058.—d is also found in MS. Munich 112²⁶, 209⁴ a. o.—For Cod. 746, II, see the elaborate description in Steinschneider's *Cat. Leyden*, p. 360 ff., and *HB.*, X, 159; for 746, III, *Cat. Munich*, p. 145, No. 258⁸; 746, IV is ascribed to Nahmanides in Cod. de Rossi 1390¹¹ (Kobak's *Jeschurun*, VI, p. 177). The piece beginning **אמשול לך משל** occurs elsewhere connected with the following (V); *HB.*, VI, 126, X, 156-7.—Cod. 748¹ may be identical with Cod. Oxford 1832, which begins with the same words (*HB.*, XIV, 8). In Cod. Oxford 1965 Neubauer omits this piece altogether. The description

in the old catalogue קהלת דוד, p. 358 ff., is much fuller than his; comp. also *Cat. Hamburg*, 233. On the החשק ed. Lemberg, comp. Brüll, *Jahrbücher*, I, 224, *HB.*, XIV, 8.—Of ברית מנוחה 748, II, as Azulai observed, the MSS. are partly much fuller than the edition. So are e. g. the MSS. of our Seminary. For 752 (and 734, 1) Steinschneider's exhaustive discussion of the complicated question of authorship of the commentary on Sefer Yeşirah in *Hebraeische Uebersetzungen*, p. 394-402, ought to have been consulted. The MS. is evidently identical with the compendium in MSS. Paris 680^r and 763^s of which beginning and end are given by St., p. 397, No. 200. According to this the doubtful words, 32, col. *b*, are to be corrected רשם and ושבילי וירעה.—Of Asher b. David's treatise a lengthy piece of the introduction was published in *HB.*, XII, 80-1; *ib.*, 82-3 some extracts are given, among them some that are found here p. 34.—P. 34, col. 2, for הגף the Paris MS. reads הגי which Bargès, Jellinek, and Goldberg correct into תנין (Brüll, *Jahrbücher*, IX, 134); comp. also Ch. M. Horowitz, *Uralte Toseftas*, I, 21-2.—Cod. 752, XII, for נהתי ואני, comp. Cod. Parma 1390^s (*Jeschurun*, VI, 170 ff.). The piece beginning בריך רחמנא is the ס' היחור, see *HB.*, XII, 84. On Asher b. David, p. 37, col. 1, n. †, see *Ozar Nechmad*, III; *HB.*, VII, 69; XII, 79.—P. 37 read יב"ק for יב"ך.—P. 41, col. *a*. The sentence פרקי היכלות אמר ר' ישמעאל xxx (Jellinek, *Bet Ha-Midrash*, III, p. 107).—Cod. 753, comp. *Cat. Munich*, 112^{ss}; IX, comp. *Jeschurun*, VI, 180, n. xxx; X was printed in Batarel's commentary on Sefer Yeşirah, ed. Mantua, f. 62a-63b; comp. Jellinek, *Bet Ha-Midrash*, III, p. 11; XIII, comp. *HB.*, XII, 110-11; XXI, comp. *Cat. Munich*, 37^s.—XXIV. About Shem Tob of Faro and his tract comp. *HB.*, IX, 20-23. The city is also spelled פארה, see *ZfhB.*, XII, 18; XXVII the lines ... נביר שכל are printed in the *Paris Cat.*, 353^s, ⁸, where also the same piece follows them; see also *Jeschurun*, VI, 172, No. IVc.—Cod. 754. The text was also published lately from another MS. as an appendix to קריית ספר by R. Eleazar of Worms on חסרות ויתרות in *Haftarot and Megillot*, Lemberg 1908.—X belongs to the preceding as shown by the end and the other MSS.; it is partly printed in Epstein's article referred to in the note to IX, p. 45 ff. For the beginning of IX see *ib.*, p. 7.—For XI Eleazar of Worms is actually given as author

in Cod. Oxf. 1569⁵. *Ib.*, 2224⁴ it is wrongly ascribed to Nahmanides to whom it is also attributed in a fine parchment MS. of the New York Seminary; comp. also *Cat. Munich*, 393⁴. This Commentary is an excellent illustration of the statement of R. Jehiel b. Asher (quoted in *Tur Oraḥ Hayyim*, § 113) that the חסיד אשכנז had the custom to count the number of words in the prayers and to investigate why this number was chosen (אשר היו שוקלים וסופרים). Together with the text of the prayers of the *French* also that of the *English* are denounced; comp. *MGWJ.*, 1876, p. 372 f.; *JQR.*, IV, 23, VI, 352 f. Our MS. also like all the others (*REJ.*, XXIII, 234), reads אבן אהרן for אבו, R. Samuel is called הקדוש החסיד, not הנביא, in our MS.; most frequently רבינו החסיד is quoted once from a holograph. It seems that his book is excerpted in this commentary as we repeatedly read: ועוד כתב רבי החסיד הרבה מאד ואין לי פנאי: להאריך כאן ר' יעקב and similar phrases. To the authorities quoted ר' שבתאי and תשובות הגאונים are to be added. Of Saadya his *אזהרות* are quoted and a passage of his Prayer Book the authenticity of which is denied. The curious passage reads:

מצאתי כתוב בשם רב סעדיה גאון שאין לומר אור חדש על ציון תאיר הלכו [ב]עקבותיו ודרכי שבילותיו ונהגו לאמרם וכתב החסיד ז"ל כי אין רוח חכמה נחה בם (בוזה?) בדבר כי חסרי המדע ברו מלבם וכתבו בשם הגאון כדאמרין הרוצה [ליתלות] יתלה באילן גדול ואוי להם שכתבו שקר על אותו צדיק כי רב סעדיה אין כל דבר נעלם ממנו ובקי היה בסודות הרבה מאד וחלילה שפה קדוש יאמר דבר זה שהרי מן לאל עד יוצר המאורות נ"ט וכן נ"ט תיבות מן השמים מספרים כבוד אל עד ואין נסתר מחמתו...

(For Saadya's opinion see Bondi, *Der Siddur des R. Saadia Gaon*, p. 13). For the additions to מערכת האלהות, Cod. 755, comp. *Cat. Munich*, 240. The *Sefer Yeṣirah* גאון סעדיה רב is also found in Cod. Oxford 1625², where Neubauer states that it does not agree with the Arabic original of Saadya. For quotations in XIII see *Cat. Munich*, 209⁶. From this MS. probably the quotations from מכילתא דרשב"י are taken in Hoffmann, *Zur Einleitung in die Mechilta de R. Simon ben Jochai* (Frankfurt a. M. 1906), p. 11-12. It is peculiar that in a MS. of שער הרום

in the New York Seminary none of the quotations of this Mekilta occur. The interesting quotation from the **שערים** of R. Samuel b. Hofni does not occur in the printed text, ed. Weiss (*Bet Talmud*, II). Cod. 756^{xv}, *Jeschurun*, VI, 172-5, is to be compared. XVII. The anonymous **ספר החיים** is confused with the younger work of Eleazar of Worms, a confusion which Zunz, *Litg.*, 317 and 324, was the first to clear up. The table of its contents literally agrees with Codex Parma (*Jeschurun*, VI, 183; Perreau in *Cataloghi dei Codici Orientali*, p. 129-30, No. 29); comp. *Cat. Munich*, No. 207¹. Of 767 **לבנת הספיר** only the second part on Leviticus is unique; of Genesis Günzburg has a copy (S. Sachs, introduction to **ס' תגין**, p. 39), a second copy written by Abraham **סבע** was offered and described in *Cat. Schwager and Fraenkel* XI (Husiatyn 1906), No. 446 (comp. Peyron, *Cat. Turin*, p. 213); for quotations see *Cat. Munich*, p. 230, note. Most of the passages given here also occur in *Cat. Schwager*, where we find some additional information, e. g. that the commentary on Genesis was finished in Saragossa on Sunday the 13th of Tebet, 5085 (Dec. 30, 1324) **שנת הפ"ה** (הפ"ח is misprint) **ליצירה שהיא שנת חמישית** **בשמטה ושנת מ"ז ביובל ושנת אלף ומאתים וחמשים ושבע** **לחרבן בית אלני"ו... ושנת עשרים לגלות ראשון של אחינו הצרפתים**

The author finished Leviticus Wednesday, April 24, 1325; **שנה רביעית בשמטה** (p. 73, col. a) is to be corrected into **חמישית** as in the former date. We have here the same dating from the expulsion from France as by Joseph Angelino in MS. Oxf. 1618, to whom Margoliouth wants to ascribe our work. As the author in a marginal note in *Cat. Schwager* refers to his teacher R. Joseph (who intended to go to Palestine), possibly he was a pupil of R. Joseph Angelino and both lived in France before the expulsion, which they therefore mention in their dates. In the passage p. 72 end, according to *Cat. Schwager*, France is expressly mentioned. It continues: **מהושע מן הרועים ולא כבדה אנו משמוע בעליכת מים הרעים שהרגו בצרפת קדושי עליון**

With the passage about the end of the exile in 5088, the one mentioned in *Cat. Schwager* is to be compared, where the year 5118 as end of Daniel's 1290 days is referred to. The book deserves a thorough examination, perhaps publication. The quota-

tions from *Solomon's great Wisdom* might well have been transcribed. That the author of 771 David b. Judah חסיד is not the son of the famous R. Judah החסיד has been established by Epstein, *Das talmudische Lexikon יחוס יתנאים ואמוראים*, Breslau 1895, p. 11-12. His מראות הצובאות was possessed by Luzzatto (*Cat. S. D. Luzzatto*, Cod. 84).—Cod. 793^c אנרת המורות read מנ"נאצאנו (Genazano); comp. *Cat. Munich*, 112¹. The passage about Maimonides is quoted in שלשלת הקבלה (Venice 1587, f. 44a-b) where the end is שלא הייתי כותב; but a MS. of our Library (formerly Halberstam 448) agrees with Margoliouth's text. Among the authorities quoted are to be added: ר' עובדיה יש"ר (of Bertinoro?) מרדכי וסמ"ג and David de Rocca Martino of whom the fanatical author expresses his opinion in the following strong terms:

ספר מיוחס לר' דוד דרוקא מרטינו נקרא זכות אדם ולא רציתי להשיב עליו מפני שאסור להנות בו לפי שכל דעותיו מיוסדות על הקדמות... ואמר על פשטי הכתוב ממעשה בראשית והדברים הללו אסור לשמעם כ"ש להאמין בהם ראה עד היכן הגיע עזותו ושטותו של זה והנני נשבע לך כי אלו הייתי מגדולי הדור בקנאתי לה' ולתורתו הייתי מטיל חרם לכל מי שיקראנו או יחזיקנו בביתו והייתי גוזר לשורפו כספרי מינים (comp. S. Sachs, לבינון, Paris 1866, introd., p. 2); Goldblum, מנגני ישראל בפריס, p. 32, note 1, erroneously refers these words to Abrabanel. The responsum following the אנרת המורות was published by Goldblum, *l. c.*, 32-37.

In the British Museum collection all the branches of the kabbalistic literature are well represented—the older mysticism, the German school of the thirteenth century, the predecessors of the Zohar in Spain and its followers, the school of Israel Loria, besides isolated phenomena like Abulafia and Cordovero. They are all described with equal care by Margoliouth. We hope that the rest of the third volume with the necessary indices which will greatly enhance the value of the catalogue will follow soon and complete a standard work of which the author as well as the British Museum may well be proud.